The Ballarat Naturalist

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August 2025

Canadian Landscapes and Wildlife
Angela Aldred, club member

After retiring in 2022, Angela followed in the footsteps of her mother Dulcie Brooke and joined FNCB, thereby maintaining a long -standing family link to the club and continuous contact with environmental interests.

In 2024 she travelled for three months in North America. The Canadian states of British Columbia and Alberta formed the centrepiece of her talk and we were treated to wonderful photos of Vancouver and Vancouver Island, the Canadian Rockies and the Badlands of Alberta.

Canada Geese- Branta canadensis, Burrard Inlet, Vancouver,

Despite being a busy city and port of 2.7 million people, Vancouver's environment of snow-capped mountains offers plenty of recreational activities year-round, accessed by cable car and ski-lifts. From Grouse Mountain there were wonderful views over Burrard Inlet to slopes clad in spruce trees, firs, larches and Coast

Redwoods, and views south to the glacier-topped Mt Baker (a volcano in Washington state). Admission to the mountain included seeing the “Birds in Motion” show, a demonstration of raptors in flight which included a juvenile Bald Eagle, a Red-tailed Hawk, a Turkey Vulture (a carrion eater) and a Great Horned Owl, capable of silent flight in its pursuit of small birds and animals.

A short ferry ride was taken to Vancouver Island where there are several provincial parks and the multi-day Juan de Fuca Marine Trail.—below

Exploring the southern part of the island, Angela found beaches and boulders, stranded logs, waterfalls, colonies of Pacific Acorn Barnacles, Methuselah’s Beard Lichen draped over the trees, and Esquimalt Lagoon, a shorebird sanctuary near Victoria. Much of the island is used for conifer plantations; trees are felled and floated down the rivers in rafts or pulled by tugs to the sawmills.

Back on the mainland, Angela travelled along the Trans Canada Highway into the Rockies, following the Canadian Pacific Railway's route through Roger's Pass to Banff. This section of the Rockies is composed of sedimentary rocks – shale and limestone - and the layers and structures in the rocks are emphasised by the snow. The spectacular Icefields Parkway runs between Banff and Jasper, traversing national parks on the way with a wealth of glacial scenery. Passing the frozen Lake Louise, views of Lake Peyto (below) with its unusual colour derived from the finely ground "glacial flour" deposited over many years could be seen.

Many deep U-shaped valleys and waterfalls appeared along the way, including the Sunwapta Falls. We were treated to photos of a Black-tailed Magpie, Gray Jay, Columbian Ground Squirrel and great spreads of "Pelt Lichen" with mosses. A Calypso Orchid was seen, Indian Paintbrush provided vivid splashes of red, and a Black Bear grazed in a field of dandelions.
The Parkway passes the end of the Athabasca Glacier which has its source in the Columbia Icefield, unusually a watershed diverting moisture in three directions - west to the Pacific Ocean, north to the Arctic coast, and east to Hudson Bay. One photo showed the tiny black dots of glacier tour vehicles dwarfed by the immensity of the glacier and its mountainous surrounds.

Near Jasper Angela visited Maligne Canyon, a narrow slot in limestone up to 50m deep and in places only 2m wide. Swirling water has eroded potholes and other shapes; a walking trail with footbridges follows the canyon. Juniper berries were seen, woodpecker holes dotted the trunks of trees at Pyramid Lake, and there were large areas of aspens, whose leaves in autumn provide swathes of golden colour across the countryside.

Moving east across the prairies in Alberta, Angela visited the "Badlands", so-called because the area had no agricultural value and deep gullies hampered settlement. But the sediments – layers of coal, iron-rich deposits and bentonite clay (weathered from volcanic ash) dating from the Late Cretaceous period 74 million years ago – are full of dinosaur fossils. Angela was astounded that you could walk around the trails in the Dinosaur Park near the Red Deer River with bones sticking out right next to your feet! Why so many? Apparently there was a mass death when the animals were submerged in mud which excluded oxygen, thereby preserving the remains. They were exposed later when melting ice eroded the gullies. Nearby were rocky pillars called "Hoodoos", capped by a calcite-rich cap-rock which was harder than the underlying rock layers.

A flight to Toronto and a visit to Niagara Falls completed the Canadian half of the North American trip. Perhaps at a later date we might see the U.S segment!

Report by Carol Hall Images Angela Aldred

Mystic Beach, Vancouver Island, British Columbia

Black Bear- Ursus americanus, Rocky Mountains, Alberta

Thirteen-lined Ground Squirrel- Ictidomys tridecemlineatus, Badlands, Alberta

Field Excursion notes 5th July 2025

On a cool but fine Saturday morning, 11 Field Nats and 2 visitors travelled to our favourite fungi site off Cairns Rd Korweinguboora. Emily had recently visited the area and promised we would see quite a few varieties of fungi and we were amply rewarded . We began exploring beside our car park area finding the ground damp and immediately started adding to our fungi list. Then we slowly headed up the road and explored the areas beside it, going further than we have been in the past.
Hawk eyes noted one Prettymouth Puffball *Calostoma fuscum* .— *(*below). Its deep reddish colour blended in with its surrounds of the roadside embankment but the orange mouth was prominent.

Two more yellow and brown Puffball species were also found beside the track. Later Emily pointed out the tiny Cannonball fungi on logs. (below)

A wide variety of other fungi were seen as per the list.
These discoveries kept us engaged to twelve midday.

Protostropharia semiglobata
(Coprophilous fungi, i.e. growing on dung)

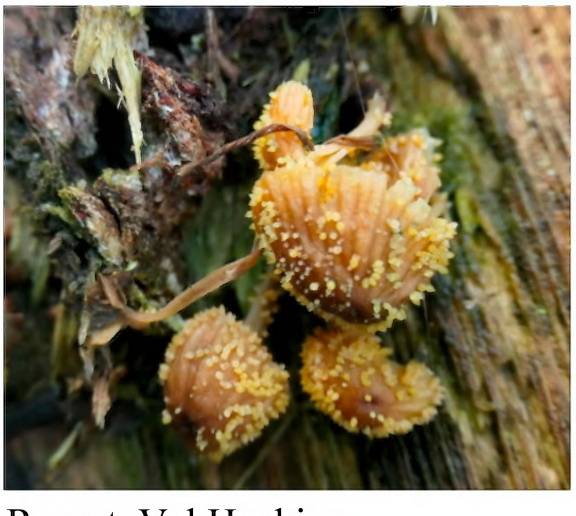
As Les had reported that the Slaters Rd site didn't seem to have much fungi , we decided to head to Moorabool Reservoir for lunch and those who were free returned to Cairns Rd afterwards, this time to explore the Great Dividing Trail section opposite our car park. Again we sighted a number of fungi varieties from the morning and more. There were Snow Fungus, a Yellow Brain one and an orange jelly- *Tremella mesenterica* on logs. (below)

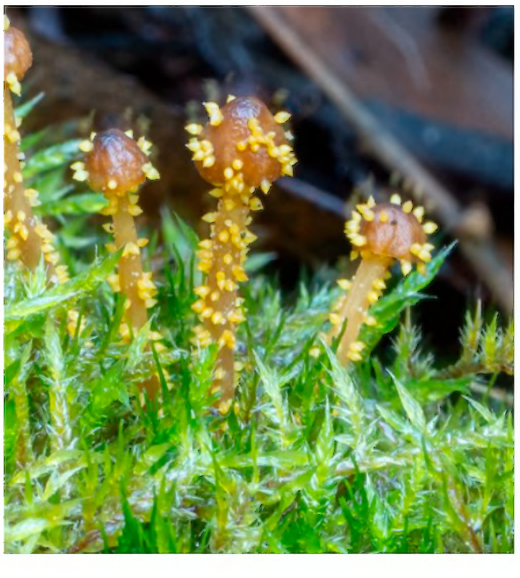
***Cortinarius** austrovenetus*

A small number of Red Flame Coral *Clavaria miniata and* Yellow Club Coral *Clavaria amoena* showed their colourful stems. Some log areas were covered in rich green moss making attractive scenes.

Emily led us on a final hike to see some tiny rare Hazel Woodwort *Hypoxylon howeanum*. *(below)* spreading out along a log that she had discovered on the earlier visit with a friend.

We finished around 3 pm and after thanking Emily for her leadership, headed for home.
Later when I was posting my photos on Inaturalist, I added one that we thought was fungi growing on fungi. The website showed us that it looked like *Neobarya agaricicola*- Carol found more information- It- the yellow fungus - is an ascomycete which is parasitic on agarics (mushroom-type) fungi - hence its name, *agaricicola."*





Report Val Hocking
Images Carol H, Emily N & Val H

Some of our Fungi discoveries at Cairns Rd Korweinguboora July 5th 2025

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Pholiota communis
Dung Roundhead
Protostropharia semiglobata
Hypholoma brunneum
Xylobolus (prev Stereum)illudens
Tall Mycena *Mycena Cystidiosa*
Onion Earthball
Scleroderma cepa
Brown Slime Mould
Leocarpus fragilis
Common Prettymouth Puffball
Calostoma fuscum
Cannonball fungi
Sphaerobolus stellatus
Pear-shaped Puffball
Apioperdon pyriforme
Pretty Horn *(Calocera sp*)
Sulphur Tuft
Hypholoma fasciculare
Brick Cap *Hypholoma lateritium*
Snow Fungus
Tremella fuciformis
Wood Oysterling
Deconica horizontalis
Red Flame Coral
Clavaria miniata/ sulcata
Green Goblins/ Skinheads -
Cortinarius austrovenetus
Pixie's Parasol
Mycena interrupta
Golden Jelly Bells
Heterotextus peziziformis
Black tooth fungus
Phellodon niger
Psilocybe subaeruginosa
Little Stinker
Marasmiellus affixus
Yellow Club Coral
Clavulinopsis amoena
Hairy Curtain Crust
Stereum hirsutum
Yellow Brain
Tremella mesenterica
Wood Blewit *Collybia nuda*
Splitgill Mushroom
Schizophyllum commune
Hazel Woodwart
Hypoxylon howeanum.
Neobarya agaricicola

Turquoise Berry
Drymophila cyanocarpa

Split gill

Onion Earthball

Excerpts from the FNCB Club Meeting Minutes held 7.30pm, July 4th, 2025 in person and via Zoom

Opening and Apologies

Attendance: Club President Neville Oddie welcomed 19 members and two visitors attending the meeting in person and another four members attending via Zoom

Apologies: Peter & Claire Dalman, John Petheram, Sheree Cartledge, Jenny West, Max Thompson, Elspeth Swan.

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Guest Speaker: Club member Angela Aldred presented "Wildlife and landscapes of Canada". Both the wildlife and landscapes were beautifully captured in her wonderful photography and stories. Carol Hall has kindly volunteered to write-up this presentation for the newsletter.

Business Arising from Previous Club Meeting on June 6, 2025

The Entomological Society of Victoria's new publication "100 Common Moths and Butterflies of Victoria" is again available for purchase tonight for $6.40 ea. Members could purchase a copy by depositing this amount in the Club's account via EFT (same bank details as per membership payments, noting your surname in the reference) or bring the correct cash to the meeting and see Kathy.

Neville has drafted a follow-up letter to reiterate the concerns, dismay and objections of Club members, regarding duck shooting in Vic for discussion and possible sign-off. Given that it had only been sent out for members to read three hours before the meeting, Neville read through it, having already made a few alterations based on the feedback received in the last three hours. It received spontaneous applause and unanimous support.

Motion: That the draft letter be formalised on our Club letterhead and sent to the relevant Minister.

Moved: F. Hanrahan **Seconded:** M. Rich **Carried.**

The Club's nomination of Roger Thomas for the Australian Natural History Medallion was successfully submitted on Monday. A copy of the submission dossier (circulated to members earlier in the day) and supporting documents, including photographic evidence of Roger's contributions and letters of support, were available to look over at the meeting. Roger was given the dossier to take home for his personal records. When asked where all the information came from, Emily noted that primary sources were Susan Kruss's wonderful PhD Thesis, Club newsletters from 1974 that were

accessed and readily searchable via the Biodiversity Heritage Library, Roger's Nature Notes articles and co-authored "Birds of the Ballarat Region" (1983) book and Emily's own records from having worked and volunteered with Roger in various natural history contexts and been the beneficiary of extensive excerpts from Roger's wonderful diary notes from his time as the inaugural Clarkesdale warden.
Neville warmly thanked Emily for putting it together with assistance from Val, Alasdair, Sue, Graeme and Kate and garnered a hearty round of applause for Roger.

Business Arising from Correspondence:
- "VEFN Strategy: A Future History": it would be great if a member would like to volunteer to represent FNCB at one of the online workshops next Thursday. Please contact Emily if you would like to volunteer.

Emily noted that in last minute correspondence, Drew Billinghurst had submitted a Membership Application form and he was in attendance. Drew gave a brief overview of his interest in natural history and his membership application was accepted by members.

Motion: That the Membership Application from Drew Billinghurst be accepted.
Moved: K. Redwood **Seconded:** A. Wardle **Carried.**

Reports:

Treasurer's Report:
Opening bal. as at June 6, 2025: $12,422.38
Income $3,101.81
Expenses: $323.00
Closing bal.: $15,201.19

Treasurer's DBB Income/Expenses Report:
707 books sold so far!
Total Income: $10,480.00 Total Expenses: $6,118.75
Current Profit: $4,361.25
SEANA Spring Camp Income/ Expenses Report:
-39 registrants so far.
Total Income: $3,844.00 Total Expenses: $400.00
Current Position: $3,444.00

Motion: That the Treasurer's Reports be accepted & tabled invoice be approved for payment. Carried

SEANA Spring Camp 2025 Update: From Kathy.
Overviews of excursions are coming-in from excursion leaders. Kathy has set up a database to record registration details including dietary requirements. Andy is looking for someone interested in grasslands to help scope and facilitate his grassland/ grassy woodland field trip. Andy mentioned that Simon Heyes, a grassland specialist from La Trobe University is interested in helping lead the trip and may be available. He also noted warm support from Parks Victoria's Alex Schipperen who would help to get the event on Park Connect since at least some of the excursion will be on Parks Victoria-managed land at Illabarook Nature Conservation Reserve.

P.S. *Does anyone know the contact details of anyone involved in the running of the Illabarook Community Hall, a possible lunch venue for a SEANA field trip?- or Dereel Hall?*

General Business
Saturday 5th July field trip, 9.30am–4pm: "Fungi Foray at Korweinguboora, Moorabool Reservoir & Mollongghip" to be led by Emily Noble.

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Show & Tell/ Field Reports
Andy had a walk along the Great Dividing Trail at Sailors Falls today and reported seeing bark stripped/ chewed off Cherry Ballart *Exocarpos cupressiformis*, perhaps by macropods seeking moisture in the dry conditions. Heavy browsing of the vegetation was noted in the same area and macropod dung was seen. It was suggested that deer could also be the cause of the bark-chewing.

Carol was photographing an Australasian Darter on Swan Pool in Lake Wendouree earlier today when she observed the practice of the bird shaking excess moisture vigorously from its wings before gleaning oil from a gland to use in preening its feathers. Photos have been posted on the BirdLife Ballarat Facebook page for anyone interested in seeing it.

Emily tempted members to come on the July field trip by letting them know that she had found dozens of species of fungi whilst scoping the trip near Cairns Road earlier in the week, including the well-camouflaged Pretty Mouth Fungi, *Calostoma fuscum/ rodwayi*, which she had only found twice before (at Scarsdale and Berringa)

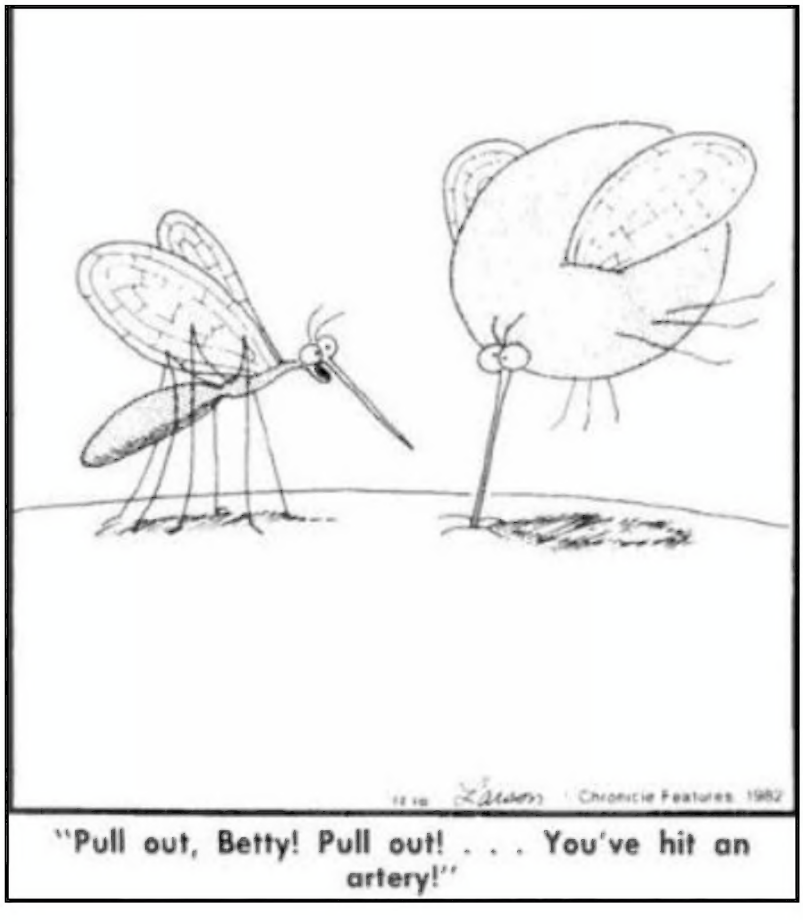
Neville told us of an exciting encounter this month: whilst digging holes to plant trees on his Chepstowe property, he spotted something wriggling in the bottom of the hole and had it identified as an

endangered Striped Legless Lizard, *Delma impar*.

Next Meeting: "Perceptions of Yolngu relations with Country: Insights from 21 years in Arnhem Land", to be presented by Stuart Porteous. Please consider volunteering to write-up this presentation for the newsletter.

When? Friday 1st August 2025, 7.30pm in person at the Federation University building at the corner of Gillies St & Gregory St, Wendouree or via Zoom if you prefer.

Meeting closed: 9.23pm.
Supper.



"Pull out, Betty! Pull out! . . . You've hit an artery!"

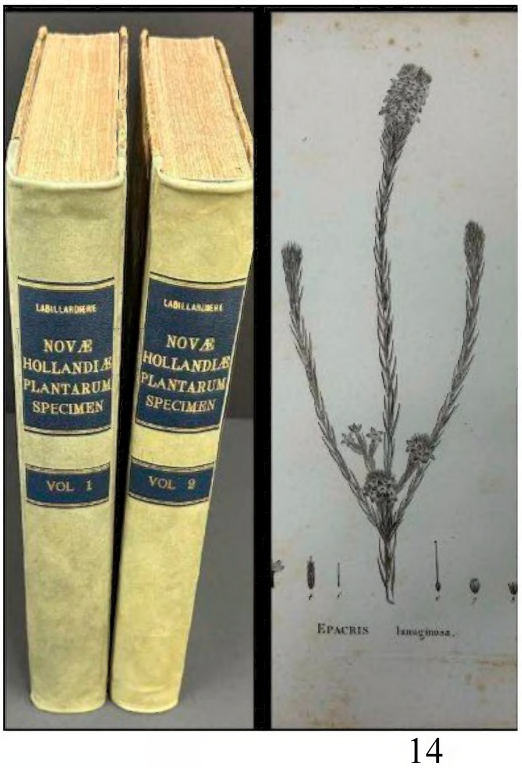
Have you had a look at our webpage lately
The Field Naturalist Ballarat– We take a closer look at nature
http://fieldnatballarat.wordpress.com

There are links to our Publication– *Discovering Ballarat's Bushland*, iNaturalist projects, the La Gerche trail, Enfield Forest, Orchids,

Thanks particularly to Elspeth, posts are regularly added such as Field trip discoveries, Are endangered species safe in forests? Fuzzy Reindeer lichen and more..

There are also links to our facebook page where I learnt about a talk at the Ballarat library this last week which 4 Field Nats attended.

Coinciding with Melbourne Rare Book Week (24 July – 2 August) Ballarat Libraries is proud to exhibit two incredibly rare and valuable volumes from the Ballarat Libraries' Rare Book Collection. The conservation treatment and exhibition of these significant volumes has been made possible by a Public Records Office of Victoria Local History Grant.
Published in 1804 and 1806, the volumes were donated to the Ballarat East Free Library in the early 1860s. They are significant scientific publications that provide insight into Australian flora in the Ballarat region before the gold rush.
Our club wrote a letter of support that helped Ballarat Library secure funding to have this wonderful pair of books professionally restored. The books and large photos are on display until 18th Aug



Novae Hollandiae
Plantarum Specimen

Tomus Primus
1804
Volumes 1 & 2

Copies of the book pages have also been uploaded onto the Biodiversity Heritage Library Website

Ballarat SEANA 17-19th Oct

Have you registered for the weekend yet?
Numbers will be limited for the evening dinners and excursions are to have no more than 20 people per group

Thank you to the people who have offered to lead excursions and are now preparing a summary of their programs for our 2nd/ final circular which will be sent out early Sept to those who have registered.
Facilitators are being finalised. We will also need more volunteers for the Friday afternoon registration time and for supervising afternoon tea and supper on that day please.

Our next club meeting is Friday 1st August 2025, 7.30pm
in person at the Federation University building at the corner of Gillies St & Gregory St, Wendouree
or via Zoom if you prefer.

Perceptions of Yolngu relations with Country: Insights from 21 years in Arnhem Land", to be presented by Guest Speaker Stuart Porteous

Sunday 3rd August field trip- 9.30am – 4pm:
to "Brisbane Ranges" led by Neville Oddie

Meet at the Federation University carpark on the corner of Gillies St and Gregory St, Wendouree for carpooling (where possible) or convoy and departure at 9.30am sharp.
Or meet instead at 10.15am at the Meredith Police Paddocks, Campion Road, Meredith.
Wear weather-appropriate clothes and clean, sturdy shoes. Bring water, camera, small mirror, field guides, binoculars, morning tea, lunch, thermos and camp chair.
N.B.: Please bring a cash contribution for your driver if you intend to carpool.

A volunteer is still needed to write up this field trip please

Meetings and Excursions

Aug events

Fri Aug 1st Stuart Porteous. *Perceptions of Yolgnu relations with country. Insights from 21 years in Arnham Land*

Sun Aug 3rd Field trip to Brisbane Ranges led by Neville Oddie

Future events

Fri Sept 5th Pam Whiteley, Wildlife Health Victoria: Surveillance Coordinator, Uni. of Melbourne *Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza - research, monitoring, likely impacts and mitigation measures*.

Sat Sept 6th Field trip with Marilyn Hewish, Long Forest in Spring

Volunteers are needed to write up these events for our newsletter please.

Next Committee meeting Tues 26th Aug at 7.30 pm on zoom

Club meetings are normally held on 1st Friday of the month at 7.30 pm at the Federation Uni Gillies St Campus (corner of Gillies and Gregory Sts, Lake Wendouree),

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Email: Secretary:- Emily Noble
Editor: Val Hocking
Treasurer Kathy Elder

Website: http://fieldnatballarat.wordpress.com

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Meetings - in person and may continue to be held via Zoom.
Members will be kept informed of arrangements each month.

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